

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO CHAUTH COLLECTION
IN THE SUBAH OF HYDERABAD, 1726-1748

Zaheeruddin Malik (Aligarh)

Nizam-ul-Mulk in 1725, according to Khafi Khan¹, secured exemption from the collection of Chauth² which the Maratha government insisted too rigorously to make through its own agents in Hyderabad like other subhas of the Deccan³; he instead agreed to pay in cash an equivalent amount out of his treasury. He shifted his burden to the shoulders of jagirdars and holders of rent-free lands by levying a revenue tax of 25% of their mahals on the basis of the standard Jama⁴. In Khalisa as well as in jagir lands he appointed separate revenue collectors, called tahsildars⁵, for the realisation of this additional sum, fixed a commission⁶ for service and in addition allowed them a deduction of 7% from the revenue receipts to meet the expenses of sihbandi⁷. While jagirdars and in'amdars⁸ took upon themselves the responsibility of collecting the required money from their own mahals and remitting it to the provincial treasury they also claimed commission and cost of sihbandi; in some cases they were not provided with these allowances by the Nizam's government. Both tahsildars and jagirdars had to execute a formal bond that contained terms of service and specific details of government dues. In the exercise of their functions they were subject to the control and direction of the provincial diwan⁹ who was guided in his transactions by the orders of the viceroy. This new administrative arrangement, devised to ensure regular flow of revenues and maintain the financial stability of government, was easily the most desirable alternative; it was acceptable to jagirdars as it soon became the only refuge from the Maratha oppressions and illegal exactions which gave rise to perpetual disorders in other areas. These factors justified the expediency of the Nizam's plan and favoured its continuance even after his death in 1748. There are numerous Persian Documents, preserved in the Hyderabad

State Archives¹⁰, which deal with the working of this system and furnish valuable source-material for a study of revenue administration at the local level. This vast record belongs to the period from 1725 to 1773 during which the collection of chauth was carried smoothly and successfully, uninterrupted by political upheavals, on the same administrative pattern as had been set up by Asaf Jah I¹¹. That these official papers are chiefly concerned with the collection of Chauth, meant to satisfy the Maratha demand, is amply borne out by the terms, "fourth share of the Maratha", and "fourth part of revenue to be paid in lump sum to Raja Shahu". This paper is devoted to an analysis of Documents which relate to the period of Asaf Jah I; it also attempts to discuss the impact of this settlement on the Mughal-Maratha relations.

The establishment of the Maratha claims to chauth and sardeshmukhi in the Deccan provinces was the result of an obstinate struggle which Raja Shahu waged against Nizam-ul-Mulk for one decade, 1720-1730. The imperial grants, authorising Raja Shahu to collect chauth and sardeshmukhi on conditions of service and allegiance, were issued in March 1719¹²; and Balaji Vishwanath, on his return from Delhi on 4 July 1719, took immediate steps for their execution and enforcement¹³. The Peshwa appointed in every mahal two officers, one kamavis-dar, entrusted with the collection of Chauth, and another gumashta, for the sardeshmukhi¹⁴. "Alam Ali Khan, deputy-governor of the subah of Deccan, 1718-1720, permitted the Maratha agents to realise their dues, as specified in the sanads, and kept close and intimate contacts with the Satara Court. Their influence and prestige rose enormously high in the Deccan¹⁵. The overthrow of the Saiyid brothers in 1720, mainly responsible for procuring royal recognition of these privileges, marked the end of cordial relations between the Mughal government and the Marathas. Nizam-ul-Mulk, the new viceroy, in the pride of power, repudiated the Maratha right to levy chauth-paying districts. Encouraged by his vigorous policy, the jagirdars and revenue officers began to withhold payment and impeded the Maratha agents in their work both of collection and extension of authority. The Marathas were determined to avert this grave threat to their interests at any hazard. The effect of superior numbers and guerilla tactics was at once apparent. The Nizam's armies sustained extreme reverses and peril in a number of encounters fought with the Maratha forces under Baji Rao, the second Peshwa of Raja Shahu. Before the Nizam could accomplish any thing decisive, he left Burhanpur on 21 October 1721

to assume the charge of Wizarat which he held until 23 December 1723. Under Mubariz Khan that policy of armed-resistance was consistent, but his efforts met with no striking success. The Marathas were able to remove hurdles from their way of aggrandizement, and their undertakings continued to make exactions in Karnatak, Balaghat and Khandesh¹⁸.

Nizam-ul-Mulk, when confronted with a potential menace to his security, resorted to conciliating Baji Rao and seeking his military assistance against Mubariz Khan, now appointed Viceroy of the Deccan provinces¹⁹. He met the Peshwa at Nalchha near Dhar on 18 May 1724 and acknowledged the Maratha claims of chauth and sardeshmukhi in return for support in the impending contest with his rival²⁰. Baji Rao joined the side of the rebellious noble and played a leading role that contributed to his victory in the battle of Shakar Kherda, fought on 30 September 1724. Baji Rao was rewarded with a mansab of 7,000/7000, robe of honour, elephant and jewels; his associates were likewise favoured with mansabs and costly presents²¹. On this occasion he came to an agreement with Baji Rao on the issue of chauth which had embittered their relations throughout this period. It was settled that the amount of chauth from the subah of Hyderabad would be paid in cash and that the sardeshmukhi from that particular province would no longer be demanded; the Maratha agents, posted to collect these two taxes in the province, were to be instantaneously recalled. The resulting arrangement improved their relations and relative quiet began to reign on the strife-stricken land²².

But soon their relations deteriorated badly, dissipating all hopes of permanent peace and stability. Baji Rao's expeditions into Karnatak²³, during the year 1725-26, came as a staggering blow to the Nizam; he took them as an unmistakable evidence of his aggressive designs on his territories. He saw the looming danger in the situation and stood prepared to see his provinces from falling entirely under the Maratha domination. To achieve his aim, he planned a diplomatic stroke. He espoused the cause of Sambhaji of Kolahapur who disputed the succession of his cousin, Raja Shahu, to the Maratha throne. He replaced Shahu's officers, engaged in collecting chauth and sardeshmukhi, by those of Sambhaji; and he stopped payment of money to the Satara Court on the ground of bitter feud between the two claimants. His relations with Raja Shahu entered a perilous phase²⁴. One news-letter from the Nizam's camp informed the Peshwa that prospects of chauth-collection in the Mughal province were dim as the Nizam was busy at work to put down

Baji Rao and place Sambhaji on the throne²⁵. But chauth from Bijapur and Bhangar was collected. However, Baji Rao inflicted a crushing defeat on Nizam-ul-Mulk at Pal Khad and forced him to sign the convention of Mungi-Shev-gaum on 6 March 1728, according to which he unequivocally conceded the demand of the Marathas to collect their dues through their own officers in all the provinces of the Deccan excluding Hyderabad²⁶. Consequently the revenue collectors of Baji Rao were reappointed to the posts held previously by them and servants of Sambhaji were dismissed from the districts and *parganas*²⁷. Commenting on the eventual triumph of the Maratha cause, Qasim Aurangabadi writes, "Asaf Jah, acutely aware of the Emperor's ill-will against him and intrigues of courtiers to destroy him, concluded peace with the Marathas and agreed to pay chauth in the manner indicated in the treaty between Husain Ali Khan and Raja Shahu. In this way the supremacy of the Marathas was established."²⁸

It appears that Raja Shahu allowed Sambhaji, after his abortive revolt, to enjoy a portion of chauth from some mahals in the Deccan. He issued an order, dated 14 September 1728, to Dharmoji Balwant Deokate, to the effect that "pargana Vasmal in sarkar Nander lies in the jagir of 'Azam Khan 'Alam, a Mughal mansabdar. Last year the chauth from this pargana was collected by Sambhaji and he gave no mujra, a deduction or whatever was to be paid. You, therefore, collect chauth and remit the balance after having deducted the dues of Sambhaji who is entitled to receive them in accordance with the terms of the treaty formed with Asaf Jah. No extra taxes were to be levied²⁹". Although defeated in the clash of arms, Asaf Jah was not at the end of his devices and there was no limit to his plots against Baji Rao. He exploited to his benefit the increasing rift between Baji Rao and Senapati Trimbak Rao Dabhada that was heading to a crisis. As a part of his strategy to reduce the power of the Peshwa, the Nizam cast in his lot with the Senapati, and they together presented a hostile front. He again attempted to drive out the Maratha collectors of chauth. One news-letter, dated 30/10/1730, written by Ganesh Ballal informed the Peshwa from Aurangahad that "Nizam is not willing to pay a single dam on account of chauth. Last year his officers collected Rs. 400 twice from the ra'iyat, but paid nothing to the Maratha government. He is trying to violate the terms of the treaty of Shevgaum."³⁰

To fight the war to a conclusion was by no means the object of Nizam-ul-Mulk, for it was beyond his strength ; nor was the total conquest of the Deccan a part of the Maratha scheme of expansion. The main

issue at stake was the manner in which chauth was collected by the Maratha agents from the Deccan provinces. Nizam-ul-Mulk regarded the system of chauth collection highly prejudicial to the character, strength and interest of his government. He felt apprehensive lest the direct collection of revenue should give the Maratha officers a chance to acquire a permanent tenure in the land and establish firm hold over areas under their influence. He expressed his desire in letters, addressed to the Emperor and other central ministers, that chauth should be abolished and their posts of operation be destroyed.³¹ Chauth was generally collected through the *Kamavisdars*³² who, in collaboration with Deshmukhi³³, Patil³⁴ and Muqqadam³⁵ settled the amount for a village which the cultivators distributed among themselves in proportion to the size of land that each of them tilled. Some time the Peshwa gave the right of this collection in *ijarah* known as *rasad bharna*. According to Khafi Khan the Marathas demanded chauth from the revenue officers and zamindars. "The zamindars and muqqadams through fear of loot and plunder welcomed the invading army and promised to pay chauth on the condition of protection. They would take the Maratha agents for examining the fields and crops ; the assessment of the produce was made and one-fourth of the produce was settled. If the zamindars and faujdars did not agree to pay the chauth they faced inevitable onslaught and concomitant plunder."³⁶

Thus whenever the Maratha arms were strong enough to prevail, they enforced their dues most rigidly. The Mughal officers and jagirdars, capable of resisting the Maratha armed forces, refused to pay chauth. For instance, when Asaf Jah was engaged in settling the affairs of Karnatak Payaughat (1742-43), Raghunath Babu Naik invaded the Deccan to collect chauth. He took large sums from the subjects as well as the governors, and he threatened Hyderabad. Anwaruddin its governor, repulsed the attack and wrote to the Nizam that the payment of chauth was the main cause of dispute and the centre of the whole problem.³⁷ The zamindars and *ra'iyat* had to face various revenue collectors, appointed by two governments, who worked at cross purposes ; the Maratha agents collected their own dues and the Mughal officers, *amins*,³⁸ *karoris*³⁹ and *shiqqdars*⁴⁰, realised the revenues payable to the Hyderabad treasury. They clashed with each other and oppressed the peasantry. The third cause of friction between the Nizam and Raja Shahu on the issue of chauth was that the Marathas extorted other taxes like *ghas dana*⁴¹, *rahdari*,⁴² and *havaldari*.⁴³ The rapid transfer of the Maratha agents, made every week and every

month also caused much hardship to the *rai'yat*⁴⁴. In one letter the Nizam wrote, "that Raja Shahu was given these concessions on condition of maintaining law and order, and that he would not increase his demand beyond one third of the revenue of the subah as laid down in the sanads. But the Marathas are not satisfied with this amount and they raise perpetually disturbances to obtain more than this. They have no sense of restraint. Where they find force opposed to them, they are content with half of the revenue. But where jagirdars give in meekly, they leave from one third to one tenth of the collections to the helpless landholders and take away the remaining amount. Besides, they seize by force considerable quantities of grain and fodder from the people."⁴⁵

So long as the Nizam had to fight with these unruly forces harassing the *rai'yat* for payment of illegal imposts his position continued to be precarious and he was ever heart and soul absorbed with this problem. As his resources were meagre, both in men and money, he could never overcome the Maratha troops and win his goal. His appeals for help were not heeded by the Emperor or the court nobles⁴⁶. Unsupported and wearied with difficulties, he found himself compelled to abandon his plans. Sometimes he remitted money for *chauth* to the Satara government; and on other occasions he broke the treaty and waged war with the Maratha generals. But he, under all circumstances and throughout this period under review, realised one-fourth of revenue from the jagirdars.

His example was followed in other areas where no such arrangement had been formed but which had been brought under contribution by the Marathas. Raghuji Bhausa and Fateh Singh entered into alliance with Safdar Ali son of Dost Ali Khan subedar of Karnatak, for the payment of *chauth*. Safdar Ali imposed the stipulated amount over the *ta'alluqs* of Karnatak Payanghat. But Chanda Saheb refused to pay the portion of *chauth* fixed on Trichnopoly⁴⁷. The Poligars of Balaghat Karnatak also paid *chauth* either directly to the Marathas or the provincial Mughal government. It was settled that from the land yielding a revenue of one lakh of rupees, a sum of Rs. 12 thousand would be realised. The Poligars of Seringapatam and Bednur had to pay one lakh of rupees, besides the tribute and the Maratha *chauth*.⁴⁸ In the eastern part of the empire, Aliwardi Khan also levied additional assessment, equivalent to the amount of *chauth* payable to the Maratha on the *khalisa* mahals in Bengal and Bihar. The greater part of Orissa was relinquished to them, but to make

the loss good he imposed this extra tax on the jagirdars of the other two provinces⁴⁹.

The procedure followed in respect of the issuance of *sanads* for the appointment of tahsildar was simple and uniform. The petitioner first submitted his application on which the office wrote a note, *kafiat-i-daftar*; it was then presented to the diwan who, if he so decided, made an endorsement at the top of the note by writing *sanad bedahand*, issue the *sanad* or *manzur darand* i.e., let it be sanctioned. The endorsed *sanad* then passed through several registers and at length its entry was recorded into *siaha*, a record-book of daily entries. Before the *sanad* was issued, the *wakil* of the principal (muwakkil) had to execute a surety bond and deliver it into the office in conformity with the prevalent rules. Shortly afterwards, the tahsildar himself wrote the undertaking, stating the functions of his office and the amount of money he had to collect from the *mahals* to which he was appointed. The present collection of Documents contains, therefore, copies of three types of papers; first, the *sanad* second, the *muchalka*⁵⁰, written by the Wakil and third, *ta'ahhud*⁵¹ made by the officer concerned.

Document — I

For instance, Jagat Singh, a tahsildar of chauth in the ta'aluqqa of Shahamat Khan wrote the following *muchalka* :

"When the clerks in the service of Shahamat Khan sent the collected amount (*wasilat*) of Rs. 16516/13/6 for the year 1138f. (1730), the officers of Revenue Department set the balance against the zamindars and urged its payment. I, therefore, undertake to send my own agents and collect the money from the zamindars within 15 days and remit it to the Hyderabad treasury. These few lines have been written by way of *muchalka*." The document bears the seal of Jagat Singh Nizam-ul-Mulki. It is dated 1 August 1730.

Document II

There is a receipt of Rs. 750 remitted by Shahamat Khan from his jagir in pargana Elkanda in sarkar Bhonger, Hyderabad for the year 1730. The money was paid through Gopal Naik, Rs. 550 and Nawal Rs. 200.

Document III

Sometimes an officer, who held the posts of *amin*, *faujdar* and *rahdar* simultaneously, was also appointed tahsildar to collect chauth from the mahals of jagirdars. Its example is met with in a copy of an endorsed

memorandum (*yaddasht*) with order '*sanad* bedahand (issue the *sanad*) written on its top about the appointment of Muhammad Sharif Khan as tahsildar of *chauth* in the *mahals* of jagirdars in the pargana of Charkauda, sarkar Devarkanda, Hyderabad. This service was assigned to him in addition to his duties of *amin*, *faujdar* and *rahdar*; and the appointment was made after the transfer of Qadim-ul-khidmat Khan. The names of two jagirdars and the amount of 'standard jama' are given under the text of the sanad.

mahals of Haji Muhammad Khan

mahals of Hidayatullah Khan

standard jama', Rs. 1254/8/.

Document IV

In accordance with the existing rules, Kirpanath, wakil of Mir Muhammad Sharif Khan, 'amil of pargana Charkauda wrote the following *muchalka*.

"As the tahsildari of chauth in mahals belonging to the jagirs of Haji Muhammad Khan was given to my principal in addition to posts previously held by him, the officers of Revenue Department would not issue the sanad without the execution of the surety bond. I, therefore, pledge that within one month my principal would give undertaking in writing under his own seal to the office. These few lines have been written by way of *muchalka*. The document bears the seal of Kirpanath and is dated 14 September, 1730 A.D.

Document V

Accordingly, Mir Muhammad Sharif Khan executed the following bond.

"As by kind favour the office of tahsildar to collect chauth from mahals of jagirdars in pargana Devarkanda and others has been bestowed upon me, I pledge to discharge my duties with diligence and faithfulness, and I will spare no effort to keep the ra'iyat satisfied and contented. At the time of assessment I will make settlement in collaboration with the 'amil. Having concluded the settlement, I will collect chauth at the rate of 25% from jagirdars, and remit the money so realised to the government treasury. I will deliver into the Department all the official papers required and will spend not a single *dam* without securing government sanction." The names of parganas mentioned in the document are: Haveli Devarkanda, Monkad, Maripali and Wazirabad in Sarkar Deverkanda. It is dated 15 January, 1732 A.D.

Document VI

The jagirdars were also entrusted with the duty of collecting chauth. An illustration is provided by the case of Shahamat Khan whose Jagirs lay in Kolkak, sarkar Bhonger and in other pargana, sarkar Medak. The revenues with effect from half of kharif 1727 A.D. (1135F.) were assigned to him in salary. When the officers demanded the payment of arrears for the year 1726 A.D., he gave an undertaking in writing to pay off the dues. "Therefore, I give it in writing that whatever real arrears appear from the records to be due from the zamindars, will be realised by me and I shall, after deducting the 4th share of the Maratha and the claim of *sehbandi*, deposit it in the public treasury". The document bears the seal of "Shahamat Khan, Khanazad Muhammad Shah padshah."

Document VII

Khwaja Hamid-ullah Khan, wakil of Shahamat Khan submitted the following memorandum in the office. "As Rs. 45307/12 annas has been assessed, or one fourth of the revenues, on the jagirs of Shahamat Khan in the year 1729 (1138 F.) he undertakes to remit the amount, after realising the collection made by Jagat Singh to the treasury of Hyderabad. Therefore, I give it in writing, that according to ta'ahhud, written by Shahamat Khan, I shall deposit the said amount into the treasury. The document bears the seal of Khawaja Hamid-ullah Khan, and is dated 6 April, 1729 A.D. The sanction *manzur darand* is written on the top of it.

Document VIII

On having received the above two petitions, the office submitted a note which stated, "The Wakil of Shahamat Khan has given an undertaking in writing under his own seal that *tahsildari* and *chauth* in the parganas Kolkak etc., mahals in Hyderabad, constituting his jagirs, has been given to him, after the transfer of Jagat Singh. He has pledged that Rs. 45307-12 annas on account of chauth for 1727 A.D, including the original and increased sums, besides *sihbandi*, as per details below, will be deposited in the treasury of Hyderabad. And whatever was collected by Jagat Singh from the above mentioned parganas on account of chauth, will be realised. The office sought the orders regarding the issuance of *sanad* about *tahsildari* of *chauth* and the sanction of the petition made by Khawajah Hamid-ullah Khan under his own seal. It is dated 7 April, 1729 A.D.

Document IX

Finally it was ordered that this be sanctioned, but with an increase of 2 annas per hundred on the *jama' bandi* (assessed revenue) of *chauth* exclusive of *sihbandi* expenses for the year 1729 A.D. (1138F.)

"It has been accepted that one fourth of the revenue, including the original as well as increase (*asal wa izafah*) from the jagirs of Shahamat Khan in *pargana* Kolkasad has been paid in the following instalments, for the year 1138 F. After having deducted the revenue collected by Jagat Singh, whatever balance was set out will be deposited into the treasury."

Standard Jama', Rs. 47347/12/-

Assessed in the previous year 1137F. Rs. 39219/10/1

The amount increased in 1138F. Rs. 8128/-

Total Rs. 47347/12/-

Document X

The office submitted the petition of Shahamat Khan in which he reported that owing to the negligence of *tahsildar* of *chauth* in the mahals of his jagirs revenues declined and cultivation could not be improved. He, therefore, requested that he should be authorised to collect the *chauth* from his own mahals on the condition that he would remit the amount of *chauth* at the enhanced rate of two annas per hundred rupees, without claiming the expenses of *sihbandi*, to the treasury of Hyderabad. The diwan instructed Shaikh Muhammad Khan to secure the payment of *chauth* and take appropriate action in the light of Shahamat Khan's petition. On the top of the *sanad* an order (*amar-'ali*) was written to the effect that *chauth* of the last year should be realised at the enhanced rate of two annas per hundred without exempting the claim of *sihbandi*. It is dated 10 April, 1729 A.D.

Documents XI

Shahamat Khan then executed the deed of acceptance, promising to pay Rs. 49348/12 as *chauth* from *pargana* Kolnag etc., mahalas of his jagir for the year 1139 F(1730-31AD). He undertook to remit the above mentioned amount to the treasury of Hyderabad. The document was written under his seal.

Fixed amount of *chauth* Rs. 49348/12 as.

As fixed in the previous year Rs. 45347/12 as.

Realised in the current year 1139F. Rs. 4001/-

Total Rs. 49348/12 as.

Document XII

Walkaji Pandit, wakil of Shahamat Khan Bahadur, deposited Rs. 60560/- as the amount of *chauth*, collected by Jagat Shankar, *tahsildar* of *chauth* in the mahals of the Khan's jagir. The receipt is dated 1138F. (1730 A.D.).

Document XIII

Dilawar Khan, a jagirdar of pargana Chatpet wrote the following undertaking under his own seal : "That half of kharif revenues for the year 1135F (1726 A.D.) was assigned to me in salary. The government officers demanded the arrears that are due from the zamindars according to the rent roll and to remit the same to the treasury after deducting the 4th share of the Marathas and the claim of *sihbandi*.

Document XIV

That the *in'amdār*, or holder of rent free land had also to pay the *chauth* is revealed by a copy of a *ta'ahhud* executed by Muhammad Taqi *in'amdār*.

"I, Muhammad Taqi, grandson of Mullah Muhammad Ali, *in'amdār* of *ma'uza* Khudabakhshpali, *pargana* Andorti, sarkar Devarkanda in the subah of Hyderabad, give in writing to deposit year by year, without claiming the expenses of *sihbandi* or making excuse for natural calamities Rs. 45/- as the amount of *chauth* with effect from the beginning of 1164F. (1754 A.D.) in two equal instalments into the treasury of the fort Muhammadnagar. These few lines have been written by way of *ta'uhhud*.

Fixed amount of *chauth* from 1164 F. to be paid year by year—Rs. 45/-.

Original assessed amount for 1162F. as shown in the receipts under the seal of *Ummal*. Increased amount of Rs. 4/8.

This is dated July, 1754 A.D.

Document XV

Copy of a receipt bearing the seal of Mir Muhammad Momin, *amil* of pargana Andorti, dated May 1754 for the amount of Rs. 12 only, regarding the payment of *chauth* from the rent-free land of Muhammad Taqi in *ma'uza* Khudabakhshpali under the administrative control of pargana Andorti for the year 1163 F. was received through Vankat Ram according to details given below.

21 Rajab

4 Sha'aban

Rs. 3/-

Rs. 9/-

Another document shows that Mir Mu'iz-ullah deposited a sum of Rs. 4/8 on account of chauth arrears due from the kharif revenues of *ma'uza* Khudabakhshpali, that was received through Venkat Ram, *gumashta* of *in'amdār*.

Document XVI

Copy of a receipt regarding the remittance of Rs. 15000/- Arcoti (coined at the mint of Arcot) issued under the seals of Sharif Muhammad Khan and Khwaja Khurshid. The money was paid on account of chauth from the mahals of Shahamat Khan for the year 1729 through Puranmal, the *foladar*, treasurer. It bears the seal of Qazi Sher Muhammad.

Document XVII

Copy of a sanad about the chauth from the mahals of Mubariz Khan.⁵²

"The duty of collecting Rs. 15506/4 annas on account of *Chauth* from pargana Kohir etc. in which lie the jagirs of Mubariz Khan, was assigned to the *'amils* of the jagirdars with effect from March 1728 after the transfer of Muhammad Ashraf, the *tahsildar*. And it was agreed upon that after deducting the cost of *sihbandi* at the rate of 7% and the commission from the sums collected by the former *tahsildar*, the balance will be realised and deposited into the treasury of Hyderabad. The number of mahals is five.

Document XVIII

Gopal Pandit, the wakil of Mubariz Khan Bahadur wrote the following undertaking under his own seal.

"As the work of collecting *chauth* from pargana Gohir has been entrusted by the government officers to my principal, I therefore, give in writing that after the conclusion of assessment, the remaining amount, including the sum of chauth collected by Muhammad Ashraf tahsildar without deducting the commission of service, would be paid into the treasury of Hyderabad." This is dated 11 February 1728.

Document XIX

Gopal Pandit, wakil of Mubariz Khan Bahadur, wrote another *ta'ahhud* on the above subject.

"As Rs. 15506/4 annas on account of *chauth*, fixed at lump sum for paying to Raja Shahu, from parganas Gohir etc, Hyderabad, mahals in the jagirs of the principal, Mubariz Khan Bahadur, settled in the previous year 1729, without deducting the commission, I, therefore, pledge to remit the amount in instalment, and have written these few lines in the manner of *ta'ahhud*."

Document XX

A copy of *ta'ahhud*, contained in this collection shows that the *chauth* revenues could also be farmed out and a *zamindar* sometime acted as a *mustajir*⁵³ or farmer in the Deccan. This *ta'ahhud* was executed by Subhan Wardi Beg, son of the Haq Wardi Beg, mansabdar posted in the fort of Muhammadnagar. It was written in September, 1759 A.D. and was received in the office. It states :

"That the amount of *chauth* due from his jagirs and government share from *ma'uza* Kesjarla Khurd, pargana Bailkhurd, sarkar Muhammadnagar, Hyderabad, in accordance with terms laid down in *ta'ahhud* written by Vankat Kumar Reddy, zamindar and *mustajir* of the above mentioned pargana, has been farmed out for a period of three years, from 1169 to 1171 F. Therefore, I agree and pledge to pay Rs 712/8 on account of *chauth*, exclusive of *sihbandi* expenditure, year by year."

Standard <i>jama'</i>	Rs. 531/4/-
Government share,	Rs. 62/8/-
From Jagir,	Rs. 460/12/-
Total :	Rs. 531/4/-

Document XXI

Copy of *qabuliyat*, under the seal of Shaikh Wali-ullah son of Shaikh Na'imatulillah, a mansabdar, posted in the fort of Muhammad Nagar, dated 6 October 1959 for the payment of *chauth* in three years, 1169 F-1171 F., 1760-1761. In this case also the *chauth* of revenues were given in *ijarah*, and the amount was assessed according to the *ta'ahhud* executed by Vankat Kumar Reddy, zamindar and *mustajir* of pargana Bailkhurd.

Document XXII

Copy of a *sanad* issued in favour of Haji Abdul Karim Beg, appointing him *tahsildar* of *chauth* from the jagirs in pargana Ardabali, sarkar Malkenda, Hyderabad, after the transfer of Mir Muhammad Sharif Khan. The appointment was made in addition to his duties of *amin*, *faujdar* and *shiqqdar* of pargana Malkanda. The officer concerned in the Revenue Department sought the order in respect to the allowance of *sihbandi*. Upon this, it was ordered that the amount should be sanctioned equivalent to what was received by the former *tahsildar*. The expenses of *sihbandi* also included the money.

REFERENCES

1. Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 972 ; Qasim Aurangabadi, *Ahwal-ul-Khawaqin*, f. 240 a.

2. A fourth part of the assessed revenue demanded by the Marathas from areas they had subjugated by force of arms. For details about its origin and mode of collection, Surendarnath Sen, *Military System of the Marathas*, pp. 28-50.

3. The six *subhas* which constituted the Mughal Deccan provinces were : Aurangabad, Berar, Bijapur, Bidar, Khandesh and Hyderabad. The total assessed revenue of these provinces was, given in the imperial sanad, Rs. 18,517,291. The arrangement made by Nizam-ul-Mulk for Hyderabad was not in force in other five provinces.

4. The term *jama'* signified the amount assessed as opposed to *hasil*, the amount realised. The assessment was made separately for two harvests, *rabi*, and *kharif*. In these documents the term *kamil* has been used, which means standard *jama'*.

5. The officers, appointed for the purpose of assessment and collection of revenues in the Deccan, were generally *amins*, *'amils*, *karori's*, and *shiqqdars*. The statement of Khafi Khan on this point is confirmed by the Revenue Documents, available in the Hyderabad State Archives. But the collector of *chauth* was *tahsildar*.

6. The term *haqqul tehsil* has been used in the Documents.

7. The troops known as *sih-bandī* were employed by the revenue collectors for enforcing the collection of dues. They took in service horse and foot at the harvest season only and dismiss them on the coming of the rainy season. *Yasin's Glossary*, B.M, Ms. f. 66a.

8. Unlike *jagirdars*, who were the *mansabdars*, the *in'amdars* held no obligations of service to fulfil and the land was assigned to them without any rank. For a detailed discussion, Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, pp. 257-260.

9. The provincial *diwan*, appointed by the Emperor at the recommendation of the central *diwan*, was the head of the civil and revenue departments, and was in charge of finances, too. He performed all the duties pertaining to the collection of revenue, agriculture, and maintenance of accounts. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 173.

After the battle of Shakar Kherda, 1724, the Nizam appointed Muhtashim Khan the *diwan* of the six *subas* of Deccan, and other *diwans*, each for one province separately. These *diwans* acted under the direct orders of the Nizam and they had no connection with the centre. It appears that the Central *diwan* was not referred to in any revenue matters, contained in these documents, by the provincial *diwan*.

10. I am grateful to the Director and other authorities of the State Archives of Hyderabad who permitted me to work in the Archives and use this collection.

11. Nizam-ul-Mulk was succeeded in 1748 by his second son Nasir Jang who was assassinated in 1750. His successor, Salahat Jang ruled from 1750 to 1761. He was dethroned and imprisoned by his brother Nawab Mir Nizam Ali Khan Asad Jang. He assumed the title of Nizam Ali Khan Asaf Jah II, and ruled from 1761 to 1803.

12. These imperial grants included three documents: one for the Chauth of the Deccan provinces, second for sardeshmukhi of the same and the third for the swarajya of Shivaji'. The wakil of Raja Shahu represented that in return of chauth the chhatarapati would furnish 15 thousand cavalry in the six subahs. In return of sardeshmukhi the Raja was ordered to maintain law and order and promote the welfare of the the people. The revenues from sair were not included in the Maratha share; nor was Raja Shahu entitled to levy any other taxes in the Deccan. The Marathas were thus given 35% share in land revenue; 25% from chauth and 10% from sardeshmukhi. For text of those three sanads, vide *Purendar Daftar* under the heading, "teh wa qararmandar" *Indian Historical Records Commission*, 1940, pp. 204-12; Grant Duff, *A History of the Maratha*, II, p. 199. For comments on these grants, vide, G.S. Sardesai, *A New History of the Marathas*, II, pp. 51-54; M.G. Ranade and R.T. Telang, *Rise of the Maratha Power and other Essays*, University of Bombay, 1961, pp. 122-125.

13. Raja Shahu appointed Balaji Vishwanath the Peshwa on 17 November 1713; he accompanied Husain Ali Khan to Delhi in November 1718. Mir Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami, *Khazana-i-Amrah*, p. 42.

14. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 785.

15. For instance Shankarji Malhar was his chief adviser. He and his son, Kishan Rao, were very influential in the court of Aurangabad, the capital of the Deccan. Nizam-ul-Mulk shifted the capital and his court to Hyderabad. Laehmi Narayan Shafiq, *Ma'asir Asafi*, Osmania University Ms. No. 1335, p. 84; Ali Ibrahim Khan, *Bha-o-Namah*, State Library Hyderabad Ms. No. 912, p. 15. According to one of the terms of agreement between Husain Ali Khan and Raja Shahu, the Viceroy was bound to send military force against a jagirdar who resisted the Maratha collectors by force. Amin Khan Deccani, faujdar of Nander, never allowed the Maratha agents to collect their dues, and in spite of the written orders of Husain Ali Khan, he did not yield to their pressure, *Ma'asir-ul-Umara*, text, pp. 352-357.

16. *Selections from Peshwa Daftar*, X. No., 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 20; *A New History of the Marathas*, II, pp. 73-74.

17. For his biography, *Ma'asir-ul-Umara*, III, pp. 729-736.

18. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 963.

19. Early in October Nizam-ul-Mulk sent his resignation and ceased to attend the court; in December 1723 he left Delhi on his way to the Deccan. The Emperor appointed Mubariz Khan the new Viceroy of the province and ordered him to fight and do away with the rebel, the Nizam. A sum of Rs. 5 lakhs from the Central treasury and several lakhs from the revenues of the Deccan were granted to him

to finance his army. For details, vide, *Ahwal-ul-Khawaqin*, ff. 184-186; *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, pp. 950-953.

20. *S.P.D.* XXX, p. 269; X, Nos. 27, pp. 22, 23, 24.

21. Yusuf Muhammad Khan, *Tarikh-i Fathiyah*, ff. 31, 32; V.G. Dighe, *Peshwa Baji Rao and the Maratha Expansion*, p. 12.

22. Mir 'Alam, *Hadiqat-ul-'Alam*, p. 138; *Miscellaneous Papers*, XXX, No. 33, p. 23.

23. For details of Baji Rao's incursions into Karnatak, *Peshwa Baji Rao and the Maratha Expansion*, pp. 14-15; *A New History of the Maratha*, II, p. 88.

24. *Tarikh-i-Fathiyah*, pp. 88-89; *S.P.D.* X, No. 50.

25. *Peshwa Daftar*, X, pp. 66-67.

26. Mir Muhammad Ali Burhanpuri, *Mirat-al-Safa*, f. 58b.

27. Saiyid Muhammad Ali Al-Husaini, *Tarikh-i-Rahat Afza*, p. 115; *Mirat-a'-Safa*, f. 60 a.

28. *Ahwal-ul-Khawaqin*, f. 240 b.

29. *Miscellaneous Papers*, XXX, No. 54, p. 38.

30. *S.P.D.* X, No. 68, pp. 69-70.

31. *Munshat-i-Mausavi Khan*, f. 141b.

32. Kamaviadar was incharge of small territorial division. His allowances varied, the general principle of payment to him was 4%. He was the Peshwa's representative in the district. His duties and responsibilities cover all possible aspects of administrative affairs. *Administrative System of the Marathas*, pp. 219-224.

33. A hereditary native officer exercising police and revenue authority over a district. He possessed the old records regarding lands of every kind. He received 5% of the revenue and five acre of land in each hundred. *Administrative System of the Marathas*, pp. 210-218; *Wilson's Glossary*, 132b.

34. He was the main revenue officer, the chief police magistrate in the village. He also exercised the functions of chief judicial officer. "He acted as an intermediary between the villagers and Peshwa's officers." His was a hereditary office which could be sold and purchased. *Administrative System of the Marathas*, pp. 187-183.

35. The headman of a village, mainly responsible for the realisation of revenue and its payment to the district collector. He was allowed 2% of the revenue as his commission. *Wilson's Glossary*, 351b; *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, pp. 126, 132, 133-4.

36. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, pp. 782-784; *Khazana-i-Amrah* pp. 43-44.

37. Burhan ibn Hasan, *Tuzak-i-Wala Jahi*, University of Madras, 1934, p. 46.

38. He was a revenue assessor and collector. He dealt directly with the peasantry. For details of his functions and powers in the Mughal Empire, vide, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, pp. 173, 178, 204, 22.

39. In the 19th year of Akbar's reign the whole land was divided in to districts, each of which was expected to yield one karor of tankas. An 'amil was appointed to each district who was called Karori. *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, pp. 214, 221, 251.

40. He had the charge of the revenue collection as well as of maintaining law and order. *Yasin's Glossary*, ff. 154, 16a.

41. It was a military contribution collected under the heading of grass and grain for the horses. *Wilson's Glossary*, 175a.

42. A duty levied on goods or merchandise in transit through land.

43. Havaladar was an officer in charge of *tarf*, a small unit and the tax paid under this heading was his perquisite. *Administrative System of the Marathas*, pp. 220-221.

44. *Hadiqat-al-'Alam*, p. 138.

45. *Munshat-i-Mausavi Khan*, ff. 147, 148. The fact that the Marathas collected taxes other than those sanctioned in the imperial sanads is supported by a Document contained in a private collection acquired from Aurangabad by the History Department of the Aligarh University. It is a letter addressed to Shah Mahmud, a saint of Aurangabad, by his disciple, Muhammad Zaman. He requested the sufi to despatch a parwana to Pilaji Jadhav, reported to be marching on Burhanpur, not to molest Muhammad Fazil, Qazi and Khatib a descendent of Qazi Abdul Wali. He further requested that Pilaji should not demand the taxes of *chauth*, *sardeshmukhi*, *havaladari* and *thalbharat* (not identified).

46. *Munshat-i-Mausavi Khan*, ff. 16, 50.

47. *Tuzak-i-Walajahi*, p. 73.

48. Mir Husain Ali Kirmani, *Tazkirat-ul-Bilad-al Hukkam*, f. 21a.

49. W.K. Firminger, *The Fifth Report II*, p. 218.

50. A written undertaking or surety bond.

51. It meant a pledge given by a prospective official about the amount he would assess or collect. *Yasin's Glossary*, f. 55a.

52. He was the son of Mubariz Khan, subedar of Hyderabad, defeated and killed in the battle of Shakar-Kherda. His name was Khwaja Mahmud Khan, and he received the title of his father, Mubariz Khan Bahadur, when he submitted to Nizam-ul-Mulk.

53. *Mustajir* was a small *ijaradar*. *Yasin's Glossary*, f. 55 a.